

How do I file for weekly benefits and how are benefits paid?

Currently claims for benefits are filed on a bi-weekly basis. The two most convenient ways to file are either on the Internet at www.dcnetworks.org or by telephone at **202.724.7000**. You may also file your bi-weekly claim form by mail.

Benefits are paid either by check or by direct deposit to your checking or savings account. If you choose direct deposit, payments will be in your account on the second business day following the date your bi-weekly claim is processed.

Please Note: If you are paid by check, your check must be cashed within 30 days of the date of the check.

When should I file my Bi-weekly claim?

To assure prompt processing and payment, you should file your bi-weekly claim on the Sunday or Monday following the week ending date of the second week you are claiming. You have, however, seven calendar days after the second week ending date to file your claim. Failure to file your claim form on a timely basis may result in denial of benefits.

Information on the status of the most recent four weeks, for which you have claimed, is available at www.dcnetworks.org or by calling **202.724.7000**.

If you do not receive within seven days after filing your claim a check, a notice or direct deposit or a notice as to why benefit payment cannot be made, you must report to your One Stop Career Center or call the Check Inquiry line at **202.724.7000**, during business hours.

Are any deductions made to unemployment benefits?

Yes. Deductions are made in the following cases:

- **If you are receiving a pension based on your previous work, which is totally funded by your employer (you made no contribution)** — Your monthly pension will be calculated on a weekly basis and subtracted from your weekly benefit amount. If your pension, calculated on a weekly basis, is larger than your weekly benefit amount, you will receive no benefits.
- **If you owe child support** — A deduction of at least 25% of your weekly benefit amount will be made if a request for deduction is received from the District of Columbia Child Support Agency.
- **If you authorize withholding of federal taxes** — Unemployment benefits must be reported on both your federal and state income tax return. You may elect to have 10% of your weekly benefit amount automatically withheld and forwarded to the Internal Revenue Service for federal taxes. If you are a District resident, you may also authorize the withholding of 5% of your weekly benefit amount for your D.C. income taxes.
- **If you are working part time** — All earnings from any kind of work, including self-employment, must be reported on your bi-weekly claim form for the week in which the work was done. You must report gross earnings (before any deductions for taxes, social security, etc.). Earnings reduce your weekly benefit amount according to the following formula:
 - (1) Add \$20 to your weekly benefit amount
 - (2) Subtract 80% of your gross weekly wagesThe remainder, rounded down to the nearest dollar, is your reduced weekly benefit amount.
For example, if your weekly benefit amount is \$300 and your gross earnings for that particular week are also \$300, your reduced weekly benefit amount would be \$80 ($\$300 + \$20 = \$320 - \240 [80% of \$300] = \$80).
- **If you are receiving severance pay** — Because severance pay is considered earnings, it must be reported on your bi-weekly claim form and will be deducted from the weekly benefit amount according to the above formula for earnings. *In most instances, severance pay will result in no benefit payable for the week because severance pay is usually made at the regular salary rate.*

What happens if I am overpaid?

If you receive an overpayment of benefits, you will receive a written determination indicating the amount overpaid and the reason for overpayment. Common reasons for overpayment include:

- Failure to report earning on your bi-weekly claim form.
- Under-reporting your earnings on your bi-weekly claim form (reporting “take home” amount instead of gross earnings).
- Failure to report that you are receiving a pension.
- Continuing to file for benefits after you have returned to full-time work.
- A decision by an Administrative Law Judge overturning an earlier eligibility ruling.

Am I liable for repayment?

Yes. You are liable for full repayment, which may be made through agreed-upon installment payments. Future unemployment compensation benefits are also applied completely until your overpayment is totally repaid. D.C. income tax refunds may also be intercepted, if you refuse to make repayment. If you are a District of Columbia government employee, your wages may also be attached. Note that legal actions may also be taken to collect if you default on repayment.

Are there any other types of penalties?

Yes, there may be if it is determined that you knowingly made false statements or withheld important information in order to obtain or increase unemployment benefits. You may be disqualified for up to one year beyond your benefit year ending date and may be subjected to criminal prosecution.

For additional information regarding claims for unemployment compensation, call **202.724.7000** or **1.877.319.7346**.

Looking for solutions?





UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM

The District of Columbia’s Unemployment Compensation Program pays weekly benefits to workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own and who are ready, willing, and able to work. The program is administered by the Department of Employment Services (DOES).

How do I file a new claim?

The most convenient way to file a new claim is online at www.dcnetworks.org. The website is available 7-days-a-week, 24-hours-a-day. A new claim application may also be filed in person at one of the following District neighborhood One-Stop Career Centers.

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| Franklin Street One-Stop Career Center 1500 Franklin Street, N.E. | Naylor Road One-Stop Career Center 2626 Naylor Road, S.E. |
|--|--|

Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Please call **202.724.7000** before reporting to one of the centers.

What are the wage requirements for eligibility?

To be eligible for benefits, you must meet the following wage requirements:

- You must have wages paid in at least two calendar quarters of the base period, which is determined by the date of your new claim. [See table below for how to calculate what the base period would be for your initial claim] Calendar quarters are January 1 through March 31, April 1 through June 30, July 1 through September 30, and October 1 through December 31.
- You must have a minimum of \$1,300 in wages paid in one quarter of the base period.
- You must have at least \$1,950 in total wages paid during the entire base period.
- Your total wages paid in the base period must be within \$70 of one and one-half the wages paid in that quarter of the base period with the highest wages. For example, if you have \$4,000 in the quarter of your base period with the highest wages, you would need at least \$5,930 in total base period wages to qualify.

Regular Base Period Table (first four of last five completed calendar quarters)

| Month of your New Claim | Base Period—the12-Month Period ending the Previous |
|--------------------------------|--|
| January, February, or March | September 30 |
| April, May, or June | December 31 |
| July, August, or September | March 31 |
| October, November, or December | June 30 |

If you are not eligible under the above base period, you may be eligible under the alternative base period, which consists of the four most recent calendar quarters.

Alternative Base Period Table

| Month of your New Claim | Alternative Base Period—the12-Month Period ending the Previous |
|--------------------------------|--|
| January, February, or March | December 31 |
| April, May, or June | March 31 |
| July, August, or September | June 30 |
| October, November, or December | September 30 |

Wages from D.C. private sector or non-profit employers, the DC government, the federal government, a branch of the Armed Services, or from an employer in another state may count toward your claim.

How will I know if I am monetarily eligible?

A Form UC 400, Notice of Monetary Determination, will be mailed to you within seven days after you have filed your claim indicating your weekly and total benefit amounts. This form will list the wages reported under your name and social security number during the base period by all the employers who are covered by the District of Columbia’s Unemployment Compensation Program. Check the form carefully for the following information:

- Wages not included for employment you had in the base period.
- Wages included for employers for whom you did not work.
- If you are not monetarily eligible, the notice of Monetary Determination will indicate what requirement(s) you did not meet.

If you think the Notice of Monetary Determination is incorrect, report to your One-Stop Career Center immediately – within 10 days of date of mailing. Bring your check stubs, W-2 forms, and other proof of wages.

Are there any other eligibility requirements?

Yes. To be eligible, you must be:

- Totally or partially unemployed through no fault of your own.
- Actively seeking work for every week that you claim benefits (a minimum of two efforts each week).
- Available to/for work every week that you claim benefits.

How much unemployment compensation can I receive weekly?

Your weekly benefit amount may vary from \$50 to \$ 359, depending on the amount of wages paid to you in the quarter of the base period with your highest amount of wages paid.

How much money can I collect during the benefit year?

The maximum amount of benefits that you may collect is the lesser of either 26 times your weekly benefit amount or 50% of your total base period wages. For example, if you weekly benefit amount is \$300 and your total base period wages are \$16,000, your maximum benefit amount would be \$7,800 (26 times \$300) rather than \$8,000 (50% of \$16,000). If, however, your weekly benefit amount is \$300 and your total base period wages are \$10,000, your maximum benefit amount would be \$5,000 (50% of \$10,000 rather than \$7,800 (26 times \$300).

Benefits are paid on a bi-weekly basis. **Please note that the first week of eligibility is a waiting period and no benefit is paid for that week.**

How long is my claim effective?

A new claim is effective for one year, beginning with the week in which the claim is first filed. This is the so-called benefit year. You may receive benefits only for weeks within your benefit year. You cannot be paid for weeks that are later than the end of this year, even if there is a remaining balance on your claim. You cannot file a new claim against the District of Columbia until your benefit year has ended, even if you have received all of your benefits. You may, however, file a new claim against another state if you have qualifying wages in that state.

Can I file a new claim once my benefit year expires?

You may file a new claim against the District of Columbia once your benefit expires only if you have been employed between the date you filed your first claim and the date you filed your second claim and earned at least 10 times the weekly benefit amount of the first claim. For example: You filed your first claim on April 15 2007 and received \$200 in weekly benefits. You then file your second claim on April 14, 2008. You would need to have earned at least \$2,000 (10 times your weekly benefit of \$200) between April 15, 2007 and April 14, 2008 in order to be eligible to file a new claim.

Under what circumstances are benefits denied?

Benefits may be denied if you:

- Voluntarily left your last 30-day employer without good cause connected with the work.
- Were discharged or fired for misconduct or gross misconduct.
- Participated in a labor dispute, other than a lockout.
- Refused a suitable offer of work without good cause.
- Were not able or available for work.
- Failed to following reporting instructions.
- Are an illegal alien not authorized to work in the United States.

How long does a disqualification or an ineligibility ruling last?

1. If you voluntarily left your last 30-day employer without good cause connected with the work, were discharged for gross misconduct, or refused suitable work, your benefits will be denied until you have worked at least 10 weeks and earn at least ten (10) times your weekly benefit amount and then become unemployed without fault. Weeks of work do not have to be consecutive.
For example: if your weekly benefit amount is \$200, you must work at least part of ten different weeks and have total earnings of at least \$2,000 and then become unemployed without fault, to qualify again for benefits.
2. If you are discharged for misconduct, not considered gross, your benefits are denied for eight weeks and the total amount of benefits is reduced by eight (8) times your weekly benefit amount.
3. If you participated in a labor dispute, your benefits are denied for the duration of the labor dispute.
4. If you are not able, not available, or not actively looking for work, your benefits are denied until you are able, available, and actively looking for work.
5. If you are an illegal alien and not authorized to work in the United States, your benefits are denied until you provide documentation that you are authorized to work in the U.S.

Are there additional denials of benefits that are specific to certain categories or workers?

Yes. If you are an employee of an educational institution, you are denied benefits during the period between successive academic years or terms and during holiday breaks, if you have been given a reasonable assurance of returning to employment when school resumes. Also, if you are a member of a professional sports team, you will be denied benefits between sport seasons if you have been given a reasonable assurance of employment in the next sport season.

What can I do if I am denied benefits?

You may file an appeal within 10 calendar days of the date the Claims Examiner’s Determination is mailed to you. Your appeal must either be filed by mail or in person with the Office of Administrative Appeals. Directions on filing an appeal are included with the Claims Examiner Determination.